

Amendment to the Specification

In the specification, please replace what has become the first paragraph of the specification (on page 1) with the following, per Rule 121(b)(1),(2) – please note that the “base” version incorporates the amendments presented previously, namely in the preliminary amendment filed with the application and in the August 17, 2004, amendment:

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is the national stage of International Application No. PCT/US00/10345, filed April 17, 2000, which claims the benefit of provisional Patent Application Nos. 60/129,403 filed April 15, 1999, and 60/176,401 filed January 13, 2000, both of which are incorporated herein by reference. The detailed description portion (including referenced drawing figures) of any U.S. patent or U.S. patent application incorporated by reference into these aforementioned patent applications is also specifically incorporated herein by reference.

Response to Notice re: Benefit

Assignee does not understand the meaning of the Notice mailed September 13, 2004. The Notice is unsigned and gives no indication of any place to call for further explanation. In the Interview, assignee asked the Examiner to explain the notice, but he said that he did not know anything about it. The Examiner promised to inquire further and respond to the undersigned if he found out anything, but he never called back, suggesting that the Office has no further information readily available.

The undersigned has read through the Notice carefully and believes that the benefit claim previously submitted complies with the requirements stated or referenced in the Notice. The only problem that the undersigned could spot is that the international filing date was omitted; an amendment adding it is included in this response. The Notice does not identify any specific deficiency.

Assignee respectfully requests the Office to confirm that the claim that this is the National Stage of a PCT application is now in proper form. If there is a further problem, assignee respectfully requests the Office to clarify specifically what it perceives as the problem, so that assignee can explain further.

Assignee respectfully request Examiner Poinvil to examine this application with the priority date of the provisional applications that disclose the invention of each claim, one of which was filed April 15, 1999, and the other of which was filed January 13, 2000.